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SPECIAL CONSUMER NOTICE
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NOTICE

On 1 June 1987 FBIS will begin publication of reorganized and renamed DAILY REPORTS. The following list details the changes being made in the eight volumes

I.	CHINA DAILY REPORT	Contents unchanged
II.	EASTERN EUROPE DAILY REPORT	Contents unchanged
III.	SOVIET UNION DAILY REPORT	Contents unchanged
IV.	EAST ASIA DAILY REPORT	Renamed; formerly ASIA & PACIFIC DAILY REPORT; contents unchanged
V.	NEAR EAST & SOUTH ASIA DAILY REPORT	Renamed; formerly MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA DAILY REPORT; contents include: Middle East & South Asia Review Inter-Arab Affairs Islamic Affairs Palestinian Affairs OPEC Affairs South Asian Regional Affairs Arab Africa Algeria Chad Egypt Libya Mauritania Morocco Sudan Tunisia Western Sahara Arabian Peninsula Bahrain Kuwait Oman PDRY Qatar Saudi Arabia United Arab Emirates Yemen Arab Republic Iraq Israel Jordan Lebanon Syria South Asia Afghanistan Bangladesh India Iran Maldives Nepal & Bhutan Pakistan Sri Lanka
VI.	LATIN AMERICA DAILY REPORT	Contents unchanged

(continued on back of report)

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

21 APRIL 1987

PNC Session in Algiers

PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat addressed the 20 April opening session in a speech broadcast by Algiers Voice of Palestine radio, asserting that this PNC will be a session of "national unity" and of "the steadfastness of the Palestinian refugee camps." The PLO leader expressed thanks to President Chadli Bendjedid and the Algerian people for hosting the PNC, and he also lauded Libya's Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi "who brought great influence to bear to make this Palestinian dialogue successful." Reaffirming the PLO's support for an international conference, 'Arafat stressed that the PLO does not fight Israel for the sake of fighting, but in order to achieve a just, permanent, and comprehensive peace. The radio carried other speeches at the opening session by PNC Speaker Shaykh 'Abd al-Hamid al-Sa'ih, Arab League Secretary General Chedli Klibi, and YSP Secretary General 'Ali Salim al-Bid.

A *Jordan Times* report on the PNC session noted that the factions represented are Fatah, the PFLP, the DFLP, the Arab Liberation Front, the Palestine Liberation Front, and the Palestinian Communist Party. While the Abu Nidal group announced that it had decided to boycott the PNC, sources close to the PLO leadership said the other factions had decided not to allow the renegade group to attend. Col al-Qadhdhafi's failure to attend the session was due to "security reasons," the paper said. The *Jordan Times also carried the text of a PLO Executive Committee* statement issued on the eve of the PNC which confirmed the PLO's decision to abrogate the 1985 Amman agreement while stressing the organization's desire to find a "new framework for joint efforts with Jordan and other Arab countries." PFLP leader George Habash told journalists that the abrogation of the Amman accord means that the Damascus-based Palestine National Salvation Front (PNSF) is now "dismantled," the paper noted. However, this was contested by a PNSF spokesman in Damascus, who stressed that the PFLP's withdrawal from the PNSF does not mean the latter will be dissolved, according to Radio Monte Carlo.

In a separate development, Habash held talks with the chief Iraqi delegate at the PNC, KUNA disclosed, noting that this was the first high-level PFLP-Iraqi meeting for several years. In other talks on the sidelines of the conference, the PDRY's Al-Bid discussed Yemeni unification with the YAR foreign minister, ANA reported.

Iran

In remarks cited by Tehran radio, Majlis Speaker 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani declared that if the United States demonstrates its "good will" by releasing Iranian assets, the Islamic Republic will attempt to mediate the release of U.S. hostages in Lebanon. However, he expressed doubt about the efficacy of such action, charging that the United States failed to fulfill previous promises to the Lebanese. Hashemi-Rafsanjani termed contacts with the U.S. Government "an experiment" through which Iran learned that the U.S. attitude to the Islamic Republic was unchanged. He declared that the United States gained more because Iran "helped obtain" the release of some hostages. If the United States had kept its promise and used its influence to have Lebanese prisoners set free, more U.S. hostages might have been released, Hashemi-Rafsanjani contended.

On the subject of the war with Iraq, Hashemi-Rafsanjani reiterated Iran's rejection of a Ramadan cease-fire and said that Iran will launch "the great offensive" when conditions are "ready." He noted that free navigation in the Gulf is "not an issue" for Iran, pointing out that Iran has not "assumed responsibility" for attacking any ships in the Gulf. Hashemi-Rafsanjani warned, however, that the oil of some Gulf countries will not be "immune" if carried by U.S. or Soviet tankers. "We will retaliate, and we are not afraid," he declared. The speaker denied that elements of the guards and mobilization corps have shown disapproval of the war and have refused to go to the front because of the high casualties.

Israel and the USSR

Israel has not been notified by the Soviet Union of the latter's intentions regarding the dispatch of a Soviet consular delegation to Israel, according to Foreign Ministry sources cited by *The Jerusalem Post*. The sources were responding to Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Vladimir Petrovskiy's reported statement in Kuwait that the USSR has cancelled the visit because Israel exploited the issue for propaganda purposes.

UAE-USSR

Foreign Ministry official Shaykh Hamdan ibn Zayid told WAM that his talks with Vladimir Petrovskiy focused on the issues of free navigation in the Gulf, the Iran-Iraq war, and the possibilities for convening an international conference on the Middle East. In remarks cited by the agency, Petrovskiy stressed the peace conference as the most important topic of his talks. While ruling out the feasibility of convening it this year, the Soviet official urged that 1988 be designated the "Year of the International Conference."

Afghanistan

The United States and Pakistan share "grave responsibility" for "provocative actions" such as the recent cross-border attack against Soviet guards, a *Bakhtar* "announcement" carried by Kabul radio charged. The announcement declared that the "servants of Washington and Islamabad" are trying to divert world attention from the escalation of the "undeclared war" as well as to "sabotage" the process of national reconciliation and efforts to find a political solution to the Afghanistan "situation."

Syria-Iran

President Hafiz al-Asad received Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Hoseyn Sheykh ol-Eslam who delivered a letter from the Iranian president and received Al-Asad's reply, Damascus radio reported. While discussing bilateral relations and the regional situation with Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', Sheykh ol-Eslam reiterated his country's support for Syria's "steadfastness" and noted that Iran "strongly rejects peace and compromise" with Israel.

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi on Pacific — The small nations of the Pacific Ocean are endangered by France, the United States, Britain, Zionism, and racism, which want to transform the Pacific into a region for nuclear tests and waging World War III, Col al-Qadhdhafi declared in a speech broadcast by Tripoli television. Speaking at a conference of "revolutionary and progressive" forces and "peace movements" from the Pacific, the Libyan leader told these "dynamic" forces that their small states and dispersed islands would carry more political weight if they join together in an anti-imperialist international front.

Western Sahara Policy — The Foreign Liaison Bureau summoned Arab ambassadors to express Libya's solidarity with Mauritania over the Moroccan-built wall along the Mauritanian border, Tripoli radio reported. Stressing Libya's view that Morocco "receives orders from Americans and Israelis and has become an agent for colonialist circles," the Bureau urged other Arab states to oppose the Moroccan king's "treacherous" policy.

Maghreb Affairs

Algeria-USSR — An "important" Algerian military delegation was welcomed by the chief of the Soviet General Staff at the start of an official visit to the USSR, APS reported.

Tunisia — The Court of Appeal sentenced former Prime Minister Mohamed Mzali in absentia to 15 years hard labor and heavy fines on corruption charges, KUNA disclosed.

Sudan-Egypt

In a statement cited by MENA, Sudanese State Council official Muhammad al-Hasan 'Abdallah disclosed that Egypt consented to provide "support" to the Sudanese Armed Forces. During 'Abdallah's visit to Cairo last week, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak urged Sudan to be "cautious" and noted that whatever affects Sudanese security also affects Egypt.

Ahmad al-Mirghani, chairman of the Presidential Council, reiterated to the outgoing Egyptian ambassador Sudan's invitation for the Egyptian president to visit, Omdurman radio reported.

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BIA Assails U.S.,. Pakistani 'Undeclared War'

LD202145 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1600 GMT 20 Apr 87

[Announcement by *Bakhtar Information Agency*]

[Text] It is almost 9 years since the beginning of an undeclared war against the DRA, under the leadership and financial assistance of the United States and it is continuing. In order to continue this war, and in fact in order to encroach upon a sovereign state, a UN member, and a member of the Nonaligned Movement, Washington and its collaborators are spending billions of dollars. Pakistan also directly participates in armed interference in the internal affairs of the people of Afghanistan. The territory of that country, with the complete consent of the ruling regime, has been transformed into a base of aggression against the DRA. Tens of camps and bases for the training of saboteurs and terrorists who are being dispatched to the DRA, and bases of counterrevolution and anti-Afghan bands who directly lead the bands of agent murderers for bringing death and destruction to the Afghan soil, have been formed there and are active.

The long years of fratricidal war have proved to the Afghans that the counterrevolutionary forces cannot impose their will on the people. Events of recent years inside the DRA and around the country inevitably made it necessary to find a political solution for the situation around Afghanistan and this demands that all true Afghans take decisive and courageous decisions.

The policy of national reconciliation which has been declared by the DRA and which is being realized, is an outstanding example of the political will and the way of the new political thinking. This policy has been warmly welcomed by a nearly all Afghans inside and outise the country. Thoughts of conducting consultations and talks, achieving accord on the cessation of war and bloodshed, and establishing national peace has overwhelemed the souls and heart of Afghans. This humanatrian and peaceful initiative is enjoying a positive assessment and the support of a great number of countries of the international communuty, including the developing countries and the progressive world.

The DRA is pursuing a flexible and constructive policy in connection with the political solution of the situation around Afghanistan. By pursuing this policy we are able to bring closer the positions of the two sides during the third phase of the seventh term of talks in Geneva between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Due to its active policy toward the normalization of the situation inside and outside the country, the DRA expected a positive reaction by the West, in particular the United States and Pakistan, and counterrevolutionary groups. Unfortunately, the United States and Pakistan not only did not cease their efforts of continuing the undeclared war and the preservation of tension around Afghanistan, but intensified them further.

In line with the instructions of their oversaes and Pakistani masters, the leaders of a part of the most extremist armed groups refused to join the policy of national reconciliation. In order to intensify the war, the United States has increased the supply of the most modern weapons, including Stinger missiles, to the extremist groups. By using these missiles, extremist elements in recent months have shot down two Afghan civilian aircraft. As a result tens of civilians, including women, children, and old men, were martyred. Such a lunatic and criminal action in no way could be justified by any society. The sinister aims of these actions are obvious: to drag the state forces into reciprocal actions and through the creation of an atmosphere of fear and savagery among the people, to blunt the process of national reconciliation.

On 8 March 1987, a band of criminals who had been trained in camps inside Pakistan with the help of U.S. and Pakistani advisers and instructors, attacked Panj city, which is located near the DRA and the USSR borders inside Soviet Tadzhikistan, using the U.S.-made (?jet) type ammunition. As a result of this attack a number of Soviet citizens were either killed or wounded. On the night of 8/9 April individuals belonging to a group of so-called Hezb-e Eslami-Afghanistan crossed the Afghan-Soviet border and attacked Soviet border guards. This aggression met with serious and crushing resistance by Soviet border guards, as a result of which two [Soviet guards] were killed.

This is the undeniable truth. The aim of the provocative and bandit-like attack of the servants of Washington and Islamabad on Soviet territory is on the one hand aimed at diverting the attention of the world community from the intensification of the armed interventions and military provocations of Pakistan against the DRA, and on the other hand, to sabotage efforts toward national reconciliation and efforts toward the political solution of the situation around Afghanistan.

It is obvious the grave responsibility of such provocative actions and aggressions rests with the United States and Pakistan, who are in fact the organizers and runners of the undeclared war against the DRA.

These provocative actions of the United States and Pakistan, which are being conducted for the purpose of destroying the process of national reconciliation and efforts toward a political solution of the situation around Afghanistan, have provoked indignation and hatred among the people of Afghanistan, and should be severely condemned by the international community.

The DRA will decisively forge ahead toward the realization of the policy of national reconciliation and toward achieving a political solution of the situation around Afghanistan.

A sound mind should eventually prevail in Washington and Islamabad, and the ruling circles of these two countries will eventually realize the futility of their hostile actions, and put an end to their interventions and aggressions against the DRA.

Najibullah Opens Private Investors' Conference

LD192227 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1600 GMT 19 Apr 87

[Excerpts] With the recitation of a few verses from the holy Koran, the first nationwide conference of the national investors in the private sector was opened today in the hall of Melma Pal Hotel.

The conference is aimed at promoting active participation by the private investors in the national reconciliation process and the development of the country's economy, improving the organization of the mutual beneficial relations of state and private sectors, and raising the effectiveness of the activity of the private sectors.

Taking part in the opening ceremony of this conference were: Comrade Najibullah, general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee; Haji Mohammad Chamkani, acting chairman of the DRA Revolutionary Council; Comrade Soltan 'Ali Keshtmand, member of the Politburo of the PDPA Central Committee and chairman of the DRA Council of Ministers; Abdorrahim Hatef, chairman of the National Front Central Council; a number of the members of the Politburo and members of the secretariat of the PDPA Central Committee; vice chairmen of the Council of Ministers and a number of the members of the Council of Ministers; and Comrade Katushev, chairman of the USSR State Committee for Foreign Economic Relations, accompanied by his delegation and a number of the friendly country's ambassadors.

The conference was also attended by 324 representatives of the national investors in the private sector from the capital and provinces of the country including national businessmen, owners of industrial factories and construction companies in the private sector, owners of the transport unions, representatives of agricultural cooperatives, tradesmen, and various commercial sectors.

A BIA correspondent reported that the conference was opened by Comrade Najibullah. He specified basic work directions and further duties of the national investors in the private sector toward developing and strengthening the country's national economy and removing economic and social backwardness.

The BIA correspondent added that Comrade Najibullah at the end of his speech together with Comrade Soltan 'Ali Keshtmand presented medals, honorary flags, and letters of comendation which had been approved by the Presidium of the DRA Revolutionary Council and DRA Council of Ministers for the valuable services of the national investors in the private sector. [passage omitted]

The correspondent further added that Comrade Soltan 'Ali Keshtmand, chairman of the Council of Ministers, delivered a speech on the activity and role of the private sector in the process of the social and economic transformation of the country.

Then, Comrade Katushev made a comprehensive speech in connection with the fraternal cooperation between the Soviet Union and the DRA. He promised the consistant assistance of the Soviet Union toward further development of the social and economic condition of Afghanistan's society. [passage omitted]

At end of the afternoon session, Pal Inder Khola, ambassador and representative extraordinary of the Indian republic to the DRA, delivered a speech. He shed light on economic cooperation by the friendly country of India with the DRA and the expansion of this cooperation in the interest of both countries' people.

Najibullah Interviewed on Local, Foreign Issues

LD202001 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto
1530 GMT 19 Apr 87

[Text of interview with PDPA CC General Secretary Najibullah by Dr Nicola Sayqual, editor-in-chief of the Lebanese magazine *Al-Sayyad*, date and place not given — read by announcer]

[Text] [Question] Your excellency, Dr Najibullah, on 28 May 1986 you stated that Islam will be the religion of the country and that a bicameral parliament will be formed -- one part to be appointed and to include Muslim religious leaders representing all nationalities in Afghanistan; the other to be elected. You also revealed plans about the new constitution and stated all Afghans will have the opportunity to take part in elections in a free and democratic manner. You also asked the masses, estranged Afghans, refugees, and guerrilla Afghans to lay down their weapons, return to their homes, and join the political process. Some political observers comment that this process has been delayed and the PDPA has yet to agree on whether there should be a unicameral or bicameral parliament and on how tribal boundaries will be marked. Similarly, the NFF congress has not yet been convened in order to endorse the proposed constitution. What are the obstacles to all these plans you have proposed?

[Answer] I think there is still time to speak about the new constitution, because its draft is still being prepared and has not been put forward to a general referendum. Undoubtedly, the sacred religion of Islam will occupy its lofty place in the first articles of this constitution.

Concerning the congress of the DRA National Front, it should be stated that such a congress was convened 2 months ago and made important decisions. The problems you refer to really exist. However, they are not from our side, but have been created by the opponents of the policy of national reconciliation. We will not spare any efforts in eliminating these problems through peaceful means.

[Question] Observers are interested in your efforts with the Pashtuns in particular, when you announced them as the elder brothers of the small groups and have asked them to improve relations among themselves. Also you addressed the Hazara minority with the words: You deserve help and the revolution belongs to you. What gains have been made by these efforts and how far have they been practical?

[Answer] Over 20 nationalities live in the DRA. They have lived together in their common homeland and worked together. If you want to reassure yourself in this regard, study again the history of the liberation struggles of the Afghan people. All nationalities in the DRA enjoy equal rights. At this very moment Pashtuns, Tajiks, Hazaras, Uzbeks, Turkmens, Nurestanis, Pashais, and others are defending the values of the 1 April Revolution in one trench. This is of itself a great value. At this very moment we are carrying out special plans for the socio-economic development of the central regions of Afghanistan where national minorities live. Elections to the local organs of the state power are carried out in a manner whereby the proportion of all nationalities of all regions is represented. The fact that the DRA heroes, Aborrashid [name indistinct] and Mohammad Juma, belong to the Uzbek and Tajik

nationalities respectively, speak for the equality of rights of nationalities for all regions and their practical participation in defending the revolution.

[Question] Your Excellency, since the announcement of the policy of national reconciliation and the declaration of a unilateral cease-fire on 15 January, some prominent observers say the rebels attacks have increased 2 or 3 times against cities, villages, and military centers. And terrorist actions have increased. What is the situation in Afghanistan now?

[Answer] The announcement of the policy of national reconciliation has not only been supported by the millions of people of Afghanistan, but also a large number of armed opposition groups have either actually joined it or have expressed a spirit of understanding. However, we know that the number of groups linked to their imperialist masters and fanatic bands did not only choose a hostile stand from a political viewpoint against this humanitarian policy, but in practice are trying, as an extremist minority, to prevent the implementation of national reconciliation. You know yourself that those who impose their rule on their compatriots try to serve their own interests by intensifying terrorist actions. We are completely confident, however, that the process of joining the opposition groups to the state, which are being advanced successfully at present, will continue. This matter guarantees the cessation of the sound of bullets on Afghan soil.

[Question] Some observers blame your regime for the fact that over the last 8 years, in an effort to speedily extricate Afghanistan from medieval ways, some radicals in the PDPA leadership isolated a section of the Afghan peasants. Is this true? Is the policy of national reconciliation oriented toward this section of the peasants? And if so, to what extent?

[Answer] The 1 April revolution took place in a backward country. Of course, in the first years, an effort was made to quickly lift our country from the backwardness of medieval times. In some cases, the question of land reform, although its aim was the prosperity for the poor peasants, was handled with haste. Our party and government have always taken into this fact consideration; witness the pursuit of the policy of national reconciliation, which has laid the ground for peaceful work for millions of our peasants. We receive information every day from all aroud the country that the peasants warmly welcome national reconciliation, and by holding assemblies are trying to strengthen peace in their regions.

[Question] Your Excellency, the ever-increasing desire of the Soviet Union concerning the withdrawal of its troops from Afghanistan in order to safeguard its interests, is obvious. What are these interests in your opinion?

[Answer] I believe that the Soviet interests lie in peace for the whole world and for the region. This has been proved by the consistent struggle of the Soviet Union for a world free from nuclear arms and from use of arms, including the (?Jeddah) declaration, and other fresh initiatives of that country.

[Question] Some political observers estimate that on 21 March [date as heard] which corresponds to the first day of the new year, you will further expand the dimensions of the policy of national reconciliation by inviting some rebel leaders and also the leaders of those parties who are presently living abroad to talk about a coalition government. Do you really have such a plan, and whom will you invite? Although this interview will be published after this date. [sentence as heard]

[Answer] Not on the 21 of March, but on 15 January 1987 I officially announced we are ready to talk with all opponents about the policy of national reconciliation and the consolidation of peace, which our people need, and in the event of the success of the talks, to reach an accord on forming a coalition government, which is a part of the process of national reconciliation.

[Question] Your excellency, after the visits of Sahebzada Yaqub Khan and 'Ali Akbar Velayati to Moscow and the signing of nonaggression pact between India and Pakistan, rumors are circulating in political circles about proposals on Soviet assistance and security guarantees to Pakistan in view of the latter's agreement on the establishment of a broad government in Afghanistan and the cessation of guerrilla operations by Afghan refugees from camps in Pakistan. As far as I know, Pakistan insists on a shorter timetable for the withdrawal of Soviet troops and on fundamental changes in the Kabul government and would not accept minor changes. Similarly, there are proposals that the Pakistani opponents of President Ziaul Haq be handed over to the government, or at least kept under control, and that aid be stopped to the opponents of the Pakistan regime particularly in the strategic Baluchistan Province. Does your excellency think that these reciprocal proposals will at least end problems between Afghanistan and Pakistan, particularly when at present the settlement of problems with Iran is very difficult?

[Answer] The term, the settlement of the issues around Afghanistan, is used because a set of issues should be settled and agreement should reached on all issues included in these issues. What depends on Pakistan, depends on its own people. [as heard] We believe in the principles of noninterference in the internal affairs of others and are firm about this. We invite our neighbors to observe this undisputable principle of international relations also. Our stance concerning the solution of the issues around Afghanistan is completely clear. We are in favor of reaching agreement with Pakistan through the Geneva talks which embody all its constituent parts. [as heard] I think if the leadership of the Islamic Republic of Iran shows good will and realism we will be able to reach agreements acceptable to both sides.

[Question] My country Lebanon, has also suffered for 12 years from other people's wars on its territory. What is your country's stance regarding Lebanon, particularly in view of the presence of the forces of a number of foreign countries and worst of all, the Israeli presence and occupation of a part of Lebanese territory? Finally, why do you not establish an Afghan Embassy in Beirut, and do you have plans for this?

[Answer] War has been going on in our country for 8 years, imposed by reaction and imperialism. We know very well the sorrow and pain of the Lebanese people and express our solidarity with the struggle of the Lebanese people to end the illegal occupation of southern Lebanon by Israeli forces. With regard to the establishment of diplomatic relations with Lebanon, we

sincerely hope to establish such relations. I think this issue will be solved through diplomatic channels.

[Question] What is your government's stance toward the Arab world and the Gulf countries, particularly Saudi Arabia?

[Answer] As an Islamic country, we always support good relations with Arab and Islamic countries. Regarding Saudi Arabia, I should say that every year thousands of Afghans visit this country on pilgrimage. It depends on Saudi Arabia to show good will toward the DRA.

As far as the Gulf region is concerned, not only do we have diplomatic relations but we also have economic and trade relations with some countries.

'Extremist' Attack in Logar Province Crushed
LD201924 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto
1530 GMT 20 Apr 87

[Text] A BIA correspondent reports that a number of criminals belonging to the opposition extremist groups attempted -- by abusing the patience of the revolutionary leadership and the cease-fire -- to engage in armed and provocative actions and, despite the announcement of national reconciliation, to soak in blood a number of our innocent compatriots by engaging in terrorist actions in Logar Province.

Being aware of the sinister intention of these criminals, the peace-loving people of Logar Province contacted the reconciliation commission of that province and informed the commission these criminals should be captured before carrying out their terrorist and subversive actions, and punished for their deeds.

Responding to the demands of the people and while observing the cease-fire, the security forces entered Abchakan region in Logar Province, where the extremist forces were preparing for subversive actions, and asked them to lay down their weapons in a peaceful manner and surrender to the security forces. The extremist elements did not observe the cease-fire and opened fire at the country's security forces, thus resorting to resistance and savage (?provocation).

The report adds that the security forces, responding to repeated demands by the national reconciliation commission and the criminal actions of the extremists, responded in kind and captured the satanical trenches of these criminals. As a result, three ringleaders of the extremist elements -- Forqanyar, Sher Mohammad, and Salim -- were crushed and the sinister plan of the extremists was foiled.

Gandhi Defends Government Action on Defense Deal

BK201643 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 20 Apr 87

[Excerpts] The prime minister has said that if it is proved that any person had received a commission in the arms deal with the Swedish firm Bofors, the severest action would be taken against him. If the opposition could provide any evidence, government will take action and nobody, however high he may be, will be allowed to go free. Intervening in a special discussion on the subject in the Lok Sabha today, Mr Rajiv Gandhi reiterated that no middlemen were involved in the deal. [passage omitted]

The departmental enquiry ordered by the former defense minister into another defense deal also came up for discussion in the Rajya Sabha today. The prime minister assured the house that the government will carry out the enquiry and anyone found guilty of accepting bribes, however powerful he may be, will be sternly dealt with and punished. Mr Rajiv Gandhi was intervening in the day-long discussion on the government's decision to institute a departmental enquiry into the involvement of commission agents in certain defense deals.

Amidst loud protests from the opposition and vociferous cheers from the treasury benches, the prime minister said there is no substance in the allegation of bribes. These are wild allegations and no evidence has been given by an opposition member.

Mr Gandhi assured the members, especially those of the opposition, that the government had taken very strong measures to ensure that every defense contract is decided on merit and that no extraneous considerations influence the decision.

Mr Gandhi said the government had made it clear that no middlemen or agents should be involved in any defense transactions. He said it has also been made clear that [if] any such involvement were to be discovered at later stage, the severest action will be taken against the persons concerned as well as the firm. The action against the firm may include even blacklisting.

The prime minister said his government is totally committed to a clean public life. It will continue vigorously its action against tax evaders, corruption, and black marketeers.

The prime minister did not agree with the opposition suggestion for a parliamentary probe. In protest most opposition members walked out.

In another intervention earlier, the prime minister made it clear that he had not asked the former defense minister, Mr V.P. Singh, to resign from the Union Cabinet. Refuting opposition criticism in this regard, Mr Gandhi said there are different views on whether the matter should have been made public. But that is not the sort of difference on which he would dismiss a minister. When some opposition members wanted to know the details of the talks he had with Mr V.P. Singh prior to his resignation, Mr Gandhi said these will remain secret.

Yet in another intervention, the prime minister said the files relating to the probe got delayed in reaching him because it was not marked urgent or secret. It passed through the normal channels. The file wws opened by people who should not have opened this.

In his reply, the minister of state for defense, Mr Arun Singh asserted that no individual, whether a minister or civil official, can take decisions regarding defense purchases. He gave a detailed account of the complicated and time-consuming process under which a set of officials deals with matters regarding acquisition of defense equipment. The short-duration discussion was raised by Mr K. Mohanan, CPI-M, and others.

The opposition members demanded a parliamentary probe into the defense deal. The government should come out with a white paper on the subject. The discussion was marked by frequent interruptions and noisy scenes. Ruling party members cautioned the opposition against the forces of destabilization, both external and internal.

In his personal explanation, Mr. V.P. Sing [former defense minister] did not agree with the view that the probe ordered by him will embarass the government. He said it will reinforce its credibility. Mr Singh expressed happiness that the government has uphold the enquiry he ordered. He also made it clear that the probe ordered by him was much before the Fairfax issue came in the news. In fact, the commission on Fairfax was announced 24 days later on the 4 April.

Warns of 'Major Setbacks'

BK210334 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0240 GMT 21 Apr 87

[Text] Mr Rajiv Gandhi has warned that the country will suffer major setbacks in its defense preparedness if the arms deals are suspended or delayed due to misunderstandings created recently.

Addressing the National Council of the Indian Youth Congress-I in New Delhi, he said the security environment has become grave with Pakistan's continuous acquisition of sophisticated weapons. He observed that the present campaign of disinformation to malign the government will weaken the country's defense.

Mr Gandhi affirmed that his government is totally committed to cleanse public life and remove corruption. No one, however big, will be spared if found guilty, he added.

Gujarat Curfew Lifted in Some Areas 21 April

BK210341 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0240 GMT 21 Apr 87

[Text] In Gujarat, curfew has been lifted completely in Nadiad town of Kheda district from 0600 this morning in view of the improvement in the situation. No untoward incident has been reported in the town during the last 24 hours. In Khambha town of the same district, no relaxation has been announced in the indefinite curfew imposed yesterday morning.

Government Issues Press Note on Karachi Violence

BK201532 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu
1500 GMT 20 Apr 87

[Text] A press note issued by the Karachi administration today says that the situation in the city generally remained normal yesterday.

However, three persons were killed and many others injured in two incidents in New Karachi and Shah Faysal colony. Immediate action by the police brought the situation under control.

Military units have been stationed at important places as a precationary measure in order to assist civil law enforcement agencies if needed. The overall situation in the country is normal.

All of the deaths occurred in Karachi which is a hotbed of social tension between Pathan and Muhajhir ethnic communities, the sources said.

More than 250 people have died in clashes between the two groups since December when the government razed a drug and illegal arms bazaar run by the Pathans in the Sohrab Goth suburb of Karachi, a city of seven million inhabitants.

Press reports said the latest fighting erupted after the Pathans, joined by another ethnic group, the Punjabis, launched a preemptive attack on the Muhajirs. The reports said the Pathans fought because they fear eviction from the Muhajir area they have occupied since being uprooted from Sohrab Goth.

Army Patrolling Cities

OW210013 Tokyo KYODO in English 0002 GMT 21 Apr 87

[Text] Islamabad, April 21 KYODO — The army was called out in two major cities in which about 15 people have been killed and another 70 injured, sources said Tuesday.

Eyewitnesses said troops were patrolling the streets of Hyderabad but in the port city of Karachi army units have been stationed in troubled districts to be used only if police failed to control the situation.

14 Killed in Larkana Clashes

BK210254 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu
0200 GMT 21 Apr 87

[Text] A press note issued by the district magistrate of Larkana says there were clashes between two tribal groups in Umargopang village near Larkana as a result of a long-standing fued causing the death of 14 persons and injury to 7. This incident took place as a result of an attack of one group on another on Sunday [19 April] evening. The authorities have assured that the demands of justice will be fulfilled.

SRI LANKA

'Huge' Explosion Rips Through Colombo Bus Station

BK211246 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1230 GMT 21 Apr 87

[Text] A report just received says a huge explosion rocked the central bus stand in the heart of Colombo in Sri Lanka during the peak hour this evening.

Our Colombo correspondent, Plabon Majumder, reports that very heavy casualties are feared as the bus stand was overcrowded.

The explosion apparently caused by a powerful bomb ripped through a concrete structure of the bus stand and shattered a number of vehicles. Police and paramilitary personnel and scores of ambulances are evacuating the injured to the hospitals. Details are awaited.

Colombo Confirms Blast

BK211323 Colombo Domestic Service in English
1245 GMT 21 Apr 87

[Text] There has been a major bomb explosion at the Pettah bus stand in Colombo. Several people are reported killed and wounded in the blast, which (?occurred) around 1630 [1100 GMT].

Details are still not known. Investigations are continuing.

A curfew has been imposed in district of Colombo from 2000 today till 0500 tomorrow, April the 22d.

Curfew Restrictions Detailed

BK211559 Colombo Domestic Service in English
1545 GMT 21 Apr 87

[Text] Here is a special announcement: The curfew, which was imposed at 2000 today and which will be lifted at 0500 tomorrow, will be reimposed at 0900 tomorrow, the 22d of April. It will be effective until 0500 Thursday, the 23d of April, in the districts of Colombo and Gampaha.

All passengers to the Katunayake Airport are expected to produce their passports or air tickets at check points. They will not need curfew passes.

Tomorrow has been declared a public, bank, and mercantile holiday throughout the island.

The blood bank requires donation of blood. All those who wish to donate blood are requested to contact the nearest police station so that arrangements could be made for them to make donations.

Death Toll Reaches 110

BK211500 Hong Kong AFP in English 1429 GMT 21 Apr 87

[By Barry Parker]

[Excerpts] Colombo, April 21 (AFP) — A bomb exploded at a crowded bus station in the Sri Lankan capital Tuesday, killing more than 110 people and injuring nearly 220, unofficial sources and witnesses said. Doctors told *Agence France-Presse* that 68 bodies were already in the morgue at Colombo General Hospital and that 213 injured people had been admitted for treatment. Corpses and seriously hurt victims of the blast were still pouring in, they added.

It was understood the dead had not all been taken to the same hospital and in the panic and hysteria which followed the blast seriously wounded people were being ferried away in all directions.

Unofficial estimates from police and medical sources put the toll at more than 110 and it was expected to rise further.

Official sources here suspected that the Eelam Revolutionary Organization of Students (EROS) was responsible for planting a bomb at the Bank of Ceylon which fronts onto the bus station in central Colombo's Pettah district.

(In New Delhi, two Sri Lankan Tamil separatist groups condemned the bombing, saying the militants would never target civilians.

(Spokesmen for the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the dominant guerrilla group on the island, and an allied group denied involvement in the blast in telephone interviews from Madras, southern India.)

After the bombing, the authorities clamped a strict curfew on the area and shots could be heard in the night. Reports said either police or shop owners were firing on looters. The curfew was to stay in force until dawn Wednesday. [passage omitted]

The Bank of Ceylon was ablaze and a car was burning outside. The flames had also spread into some of the open fronted shops pouring clouds of black smoke high over the city centre.

Many of the market stalls in the Pettah area are run by Sri Lanka's minority Tamil community, but it was impossible to tell from the corpses which race had been killed. [passage omitted]

Angry Sinhalese, the island's majority community, accosted a few foreigners at the scene and screamed "Tigers, Tigers" meaning they blamed the LTTE for the blast. The LTTE is leading a bloody campaign for a homeland in the north and east. It has been blamed by the government for the slaughter of 141 people, nearly all Sinhalese, in two separate shootings in the northeast since Good Friday.

As darkness fell on the Sri Lankan capital and the evening pre-monsoon storm broke, sirens screeched through the choked commuter traffic trying to reach hospitals.

Majlis Speaker on Hostages, IRGC Morale, U.S. Ties

LD201644 Tehran IRNA in English 1632 GMT 20 Apr 87

[Text] Tehran, April 20, IRNA — There are indications that certain U.S. officials are against the release of hostages in Lebanon so that they could use the issue of hostage-taking as an excuse for continuing their hostile and aggressive policies towards Iran, said Majlis speaker Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani here Monday.

Speaking at a press conference, the speaker said that Iran has repeatedly announced its readiness to secure the release of American and non-American hostages in Lebanon. But, he noted, such efforts depend on the non-hostile attitude of the U.S. towards the Islamic Republic. However, he went on, performance and behavior of the U.S. have so far lent proof of its hostility towards Iran.

Questioned about the possibility of resumption of ties with the U.S., Rafsanjani said "we do not think that Tehran-Washington relations should remain cut for ever. It was the U.S. which first severed ties with Iran."

The Majlis speaker noted that the U.S. has pursued, and is still pursuing, a malicious policy towards Iran since the victory of the 1979 Islamic revolution. The U.S. policy is basically against Iran, he added.

Washington refuses to return Iranian assets seized by the U.S. government, said Rafsanjani, adding that the former U.S. Embassy in Tehran had been a center for plots against the Islamic Republic.

Rafsanjani said that once Iran is assured that the U.S. does not intend to engage in any more mischief against Iran it would be prepared to resume relations with Washington. "But," he said, "this is difficult because there have been some mischievous moves by the U.S. even over this same period."

Iran's re-establishment of relations with the U.S. would be pending Washington's termination of its hostile acts, the speaker said.

Another stumbling block in resumption of relations between Iran and the U.S., he continued, is the Zionist entity. "If the U.S. should want to continue its unlimited support for Israel, hardly would it be able to have relations with Iran", he said.

The Majlis speaker said that the superpowers are very unlikely to launch any aggression in the region, because the Persian Gulf neither resembles Vietnam or Afghanistan, nor can its problems be compared to those they faced in Afghanistan and Vietnam.

Rafsanjani denied rumours purporting a recent show of disapproval of a continued war with Iraqi by a segment of Islamic Revolution's Guares Corps and said "These are sheer rumors. Cite your sources if you have any." Reiterating that the IRGC personnel and other Muslim combatants have always favored the continuation of the war until an eventual victory.

Commenting on the likelihood of the Persian Gulf states flying U.S. and Soviet flags on their vessels, the speaker said "Tankers traffic per se is no issue to us unless the regional states should be tempted to use those flags for preventing Iran's reprisal attacks on the Iraqis despite which condition we will retaliate without qualms," he declared.

On the proposed construction of an Iran-Turkey oil pipeline, Rafsanjani said that Iran is interested in expanding its diplomatic relations as well as the volume of trade with Turkey. But, he noted, for the time being Iran is not in a position to make heavy investments on the project.

Commenting on the allegation that Iran intends to separate Iraqi Kurdistan from the rest of Iraq, by uniting with the Barazani's and Talebani's groups (Iraqi Kurdish dissidents fighting the Baghdad government), the speaker made it clear that Iran respects Iraq's territorial integrity. "We think that if a popular government comes to power in Baghdad, then Iraqi opposition forces would not want to dismember Iraq," he added.

On the possibility of an end to the Iraqi-imposed war through political means, speaker Rafsanjani said that doors are open for those who invite us to end the war through a political way. If Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Egypt, the U.S., the Soviet Union and France cut off their support for Baghdad, Iraq will give in within a few months. But, he noted, those who support the Baghdad regime do not want an end to the war.

The Majlis speaker also said that if countries helping Iraq want it to stop its acts of mischief in the Persian Gulf, safe shipping would be secured. However, he added, decisions are made outside Iraq.

On the efforts of regional countries to find a political solution to the Iraqi-imposed war, he said that such a solution is not impossible. After each attack on Iraqi forces, Iran waits for sometime to see if its demands would be met.

Asked whether Iran is satisfied with McFarlane's visit to Iran, the speaker said "we did not gain anything to be happy. We only received 2,000 anti-tank 'TOW' missiles and a few spare parts of 'Hawk' system. They were not of much value because we are manufacturing TOW missiles and most parts of the Hawk system in the country."

"The U.S. gained more in the issue, because some hostages were released," Rafsanjani said "we are not happy to have caused trouble for Reagan and the White House. We did not initially intend to. Western mass media and (Reagan's rival) party (Democrats) created the problem."

On Iran's readiness to resume talks with the U.S., the Majlis speaker said that Iran would not do so unless first the U.S. should release Iran's frozen assets. In that case, he said, Iran would mediate with captors of hostages in Lebanon.

But, Rafsanjani noted, Iran is not sure whether the Lebanese people would welcome Iran's offer to mediate, because, he said, Washington did not live up to its promise in relation with the situation in Lebanon, when it tried its abortive efforts for mending relations with the Islamic Republic.

Tehran Details News Conference

NC210651 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
0330 GMT 21 Apr 87

[Text] Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani, speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly [Majlis] and the imam's representative at the Supreme Defense Council, granted a press and radio-television conference yesterday afternoon with many foreign and domestic correspondents and representatives of the mass media, answering their questions on various topics.

In answer to a question by a correspondent of the FRG weekly *Hoer Zu* about a film aired on FRG television, which offended the Muslim Iranian nation, and about Iranian-FRG relations, Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: We should notice how the FRG Government interprets freedom. For example, is it freedom to insult leaders that nations consider holy; and is this a suitable act? If this is their interpretation of freedom, it is not a good one. Moreover, that film was untrue, and lies are not acceptable in any culture. You should consider the degree of respect our nation and other Muslims of the world feel for our imam and understand that they have been offended. As for Iranian-FRG relations, we hope these relations will not be weakened; we want good relations with the FRG.

An ABC Television Network correspondent asked: There are rumors that the Revolution Guards have refused, for the first time, to obey a command to continue the war because of heavy casualties. Is this true? The imam's representative at the Supreme Defense Council answered: I do not think this is true because our Revolution Guards and Mobilization Corps members volunteer to go to the battlefields. The opposite may be true, because they want to go to the fronts, and we must control them until the time is ripe. These are mere speculations aimed at creating rumors.

The ABC correspondent asked: Is the Iranian Government prepared to work actively for the release of U.S. hostages in Lebanon? Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: We have repeatedly declared that if we are convinced the United States is not hostile toward us, we will do so. But unfortunately, your country's behavior demonstrates hostility toward us. In fact, we have even seen signs that the Americans, for political objectives possibly aimed at crating pretexts for intervention and propaganda, do not wish to see the hostage issue resolved.

A correspondent of Switzerland's *Weltwoche* asked: During a recent conference in Iran of opponents to the Iraqi regime, it was reported that they prefer a coalition of various Iraqi elements, in any form, to an Islamic republic there. What is the Iranian Government's view of how to end the war and the basic type of regime it would like to see in power in Iraq? The Majlis speaker said: The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the Iraqi nation should determine that. We do not want to impose our views on the Iraqi nation. After the downfall of Saddam and the Ba'thist Party, the Iraqi nation should decide. Of course, as both our nations are Muslim, we would prefer that Iraq's future government be Islamic, but this would depend on what the Iraqi nation wants.

The correspondent of the Voice of the Islamic Republic asked: In your opinion, will the defeats experienced by the United States in Vietnam and the Soviet Union in Afghanistan be repeated in the Persian Gulf? Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: Repetition of these experiences is very unlikely, because the United States' loss in Vietnam would discourage it from attempting a similar involvement. The same is true of the Soviet Union. Moreover, the Persian Gulf is not like Vietnam; they would face more difficulties here. Their involvement would be very unlikely because circumstances here are different.

A *Washington Post* correspondent asked about contacts with Reagan and efforts to improve Iranian-U.S. relations. Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani noted U.S. efforts to establish contacts with Iran through various means. Regarding improved relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United States, he said: The imam announced some time ago, and we have reiterated this stance: We do not think relations with the United States should remain severed forever. The United States was the first to sever ties, and when they did so we found this satisfactory, because U.S. policy before and after the revolution has been malicious. The title of great satan given to the United States is not an exaggeration. You seize our assets without reason; you hatch various plots; you disseminate fabricated propaganda; and you support our enemies. Once we are assured that the United States intends to stop engaging in mischief against us, when this is proven, we will be prepared to establish relations. But this, in my opinion, will be extremely difficult. At any rate, the establishment of relations with the United States would depend on America's terminating its mischief. One of the stumbling blocks between us is the issue of Israel. If the United States wants to continue its unlimited support for Israel, it will be very difficult for it to establish relations with Iran.

The Washington Post correspondent asked: Is the Iranian Government happy and satisfied with its contacts with the U.S. Administration? The Majlis speaker answered: Nothing was gained from the contacts we had with the Americans. These contacts were only a test, an experiment. After a while, when the Americans insisted — through middlemen — that their policy toward the Islamic revolution had changed, we saw there had been no change. What we gained was unimportant. We received approximately 2,000 TOW missiles, which we manufacture ourselves in Iran. This was not of much value. We also received a small quantity of Hawk system parts, which we are also manufacturing ourselves. Of course, we still need some parts. But these contacts were not of great value for us. The test was more valuable. You gained more, because we helped obtain the release of some of your hostages. Had you been faithful to your promise and had the United States used its influence for the release of Lebanese prisoners held by its allies, more American hostages might have been released.

In answer to a question from a *Los Angeles Times* correspondent on the same topic, Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: I have repeatedly said the United States can prove its good will by releasing our assets seized illegally in the United States. We will mediate with the Lebanese people for the release of hostages. Of course, I am not sure the Lebanese people would welcome Iran's mediation, because the United States did not live up to its promise to them last time.

A correspondent of London's *Inquiry* asked: In view of recent meetings between some Persian Gulf heads of state with factions of the Iraqi regime, there appear to be possibilities for political changes in the Iraqi regime. Can Iran gain its rights through political channels; is this possible? Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani answered: Of course this is not impossible. Usually after we attack and inflict blows, we wait to see if Saddam's mentors become aware and if our rights can be gained through their pressures. But many years of experience have shown that if there is no force, perseverance, and fear on their part about the continuation of the war, they will not surrender. It has been proven elsewhere that once the flame of war is extinguished, no one is prepared to cede the rights of others through talks. This is what happened as far as Israel and the occupied territories are concerned.

An AFP correspondent asked: Last year you stated you will inflict the final blow on Iraq. How do you view this year? The imam's representative at the Supreme Defense Council said: The final blow interpretation was made by the mass media based on the people's slogans. We spoke about a fateful blow, and this is what we inflicted. As you saw in the "Karbala'-5" operation, we inflicted a strong blow on Iraq, and the Iraqi war machine was greatly damaged. We opened the path for more victories. This will be the year in which we will reap the fruits of the blows we inflicted last year.

A *Resalat* correspondent asked: What will be the Islamic Republic's approach to the passage of tankers flying U.S. and Soviet flags in Persian Gulf waters? Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani replied: The traffic of tankers is not an issue for us; this traffic is free. The issue is whether the Persian Gulf's southern states want to act in such a way as to allow Iraq to attack our ships and prevent our retaliatory acts with trickery. Naturally, our hands will not be tied. Of course, we have not assumed responsibility, in any case, for attacking any ship so far. I do not think that some Persian Gulf countries' oil will become immune from attack when carried by U.S. and Soviet tankers, because we will retaliate and we are not afraid.

A correspondent of London's *Al-'Alam* asked: What is your opinion of attempts by the superpowers and some regional countries to involve you in the exacerbation of a Persian Gulf crisis? What is your stand on the Palestinian factions' conference in Algeria, and how do you assess the existing conflicts among the Palestinian groups? The imam's representative at the Supreme Defense Council answered: Part of the issue concerning efforts to create a crisis in the Persian Gulf is nothing but a commotion, because they know they will gain nothing here and they cannot catch any fish in such muddy waters. But they may want to create a crisis in order to save Saddam. We are fully prepared to confront such a crisis. But their efforts would backfire, because the security of the Persian Gulf's southern states and the world economy would be destroyed. If such a crisis is created, no more oil will leave the Persian Gulf. Regarding the Palestinian issue, we want all the Palestinian factions to unite and struggle for the salvation of a united Palestine. We will help anyone who can establish this unity. But there is one main issue at this point: Efforts are being made to magnify the threat of the Islamic revolution and Islam to regional Arab countries, to call on these countries — under the shadow of this threat — to come to terms with Israel and prepare to confront the threat of Islam. Of course, this is an attempt to trick these countries. I must say that not only do we not constitute a threat to them, but also we will support the Islamic countries and will be in the forefront after the war in ensuring regional security. This security is to our benefit. We hope that the Palestinians and regional countries will not be tricked.

Japan's NHK television network correspondent then asked when the report on McFarlane will be published. Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: A report is being prepared and will be published at a suitable time. These documents might be exhibitied at a pavilion of an international fair in the future. We will do this if we deem it suitable.

An IRNA correspondent asked: There have been allegations that the Americans have tapes and films of their talks with the Iranian side. What is your opinion? The Majlis speaker said: Films may have been taken in some venues where talks were held. But this would have been impossible within Iran. At any rate, if this is true, it is to our benefit. We have stated the truth so far, and we will never fear such allegations. On the contrary, we are pleased.

Japan's *Asahi* correspondent asked why the "Karbala'-5" operation has been wound down, when Iran's great offensive would commence, and what the terms were for accepting a cease-fire. The imam's representative replied: As far as the "Karbala'-5" operation and other operations are concerned, our war is a military one. We take all conditions into consideration and act as we see fit.

More on News Conference

NC210844 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
0430 GMT 21 Apr 87

[Text] Japan's *Asahi* correspondent asked why the "Karbala'-5" operation has been wound down, when Iran's great offensive would commence, and what the terms were for accepting a cease-fire. The imam's representative replied: As far as the "Karbala'-5" operation and other operations are concerned, our war is a military one. We take all conditions into consideration and act as we see fit. We regret that people are being killed in this war, even that Iraqis are dying. But we will not halt the war for this reason. When all conditions are ready for the great offensive, it will take place. As for efforts for a cease-fire, we have been approached. But we repeat what we have said in the past: First, accept the fact that Saddam is the aggressor and that he started the war; and, second, begin a trial to judge the aggressor. Then we will halt the war. But we do not accept this being done after the month of Ramadan and when they want it. No. No one has given a specific, positive answer to our request. Of course they make statements and send messages, but we do not consider these serious.

A correspondent of Turkey's *Gunes* asked about talks between Turkish and Iraqi [as heard] officials on the construction of a third oil pipeline and Iranian-Turkish commercial relations. Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: We want to expand our trade with Turkey and consolidate our diplomatic relations. As for the pipeline, this will naturally require a great investment, and the

problem that should be solved between us and Turkey is this one of investment. We are not in a position to invest heavily.

The *Gunes* correspondent asked: The Kurdish forces of Barzani and Talebani fighting the Iraqi regime have united with the help of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Does this unity not signal a future step toward establishing an independent Kurdistan in Iraq? Do you approve of the establishment of an independent Kurdistan in other countries? Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani answered: We have repeatedly announced that we respect Iraq's unity and territorial integrity, and if a popular government comes to power in Iraq, the forces struggling against Saddam within Iraq will not support dismemberment. This is also our opinion regarding Turkey, Iran, Syria, and other countries. The territorial integrity of these countries should be protected.

In answer to a question by a *Tehran Times* correspondent on how Saddam's downfall can be achieved through political means and about the continuation of the war, the imam's representative at the Supreme Defense Council stated: Those who invite us to end the war have the means to end it politically. If countries like Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Kuwait, France, the Soviet Union, the United States, and those who extend great assistance to Iraq were to stop this assistance, Iraq would surrender within a few months. After Iraq's surrender, we who have no desire to fight would end the war. The war can be ended by political means, but those who help Iraq do not want the war to end. Even with regard to Persian Gulf security, if they were to see that Iraq does not resort to mischief in the area, security would be established. Policies can be implemented to end the war.

A correspondent of *Kayhan International* asked about the Indian prime minister's stand on Muslims in India. Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: He has made a mistake, because the Muslims are a great force in India and play a great role in India's freedom. If their native sentiments suffer, many problems will arise. The policy of crushing Muslims there is mistaken, and I hope it will be discontinued.

In answer to a BBC correspondent on the condition of our country's Air Force, the Majlis speaker said: We have repaired many of our aircraft, and parts manufacture in Iran is progressing extremely well. Our Air Force is now in very good condition.

An AFP correspondent asked: In view of the imam's four recent speeches, some observers believe there are conflicts within the Iranian leadership. Would you comment on this? Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani replied: These are mere rumors spread to create discord. There is complete harmony among Iran's decision-making bodies, and we all sincerely accept the imam's statements. There are no difficulties or differences of opinion creating discord among the country's decisionmakers.

A correspondent of the Arabic magazine *Al-Mawqif al-'Arabi*, published in Cyprus, asked: There are reports on recent clashes in the Strait of Hormuz between Iranian and U.S. forces; are these reports correct? The imam's representative answered: There has been no clash between us and the U.S. forces. A U.S. reconnaissance plane violated airspace over our territorial waters 2 or 3 days ago, but it was chased away by our fighters. Of course, our reconnaissance aircraft sometimes approach the U.S. fleet in that region. They warn us, and we, in turn, warn them not to approach the area of our territorial waters.

In answer to a question by an *Abrar* newspaper correspondent about the Islamic Republic's policy of retaliation and about more forceful implementation of this policy vis-a-vis some regional countries, as well as retaliation in terms of chemical warfare, Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani replied: We do not see any need now for more forceful implementation of the policy of retaliation vis-a-vis obtrusive regional countries, and we prefer to avoid clashes with our neighbors. As for chemical weaponry, we have declared we will not use this and we have taken this issue to the United Nations as well. If they do not take effective steps, and if Iraq again resorts to such mischief, apparently we will be compelled to use this warfare.

A *Keyhan al-'Arabi* newspaper correspondent asked about allegations by some of the world's mass media about a chill in Iranian-Syrian relations and a halt in Iranian oil exports to Syria. The Majlis speaker answered: There is no chill. The Syrian oil minister is in Iran at this very moment. Usually, on the basis of our agreement, we deliver 1 million tonnes of crude oil to Syria once a year, to be used for its operations connected with its struggles against Israel. There has been no delay in this delivery.

Our correspondent reports that at the end of this news conference Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani asked all correspondents to inform the world of problems and realities and, by disseminating news honestly, to help the world public form a correct opinion.

Foreign Ministry Issues Statement on Palestine

NC210824 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
0430 GMT 21 Apr 87

[Text] According to the Central News Unit, following new political provocations in the region regarding the fate of occupied Palestine, our country's Foreign Ministry has issued a statement. This statement asserts that in view of the importance of Palestinian aspirations in the strategy of its foreign policy, the Islamic Republic of Iran's Foreign Ministry considers it essential to note the following points with regard to recent developments:

Palestinian aspirations are Islamic aspirations, and efforts to attain these are the dearest wish of millions of Muslims. Hence, the Islamic Republic considers efforts for the liberation of this hallowed land a divine obligation.

In view of the need for an end to years of bloody conflict involving the oppressed and tyrannized Palestinian Muslims, a conflict which has continued under the worst possible conditions and with the least possible facilities, it is imperative that the Islamic Republic of Iran address the Muslim and combatant Palestinian nation in the occupied lands and abroad. In light of the current trend in the Palestinian arena and efforts to divert their struggles from the true path toward compromising situations under alleged slogans of peace, we must ask the Muslim and combatant Palestinian nation not to sacrifice its interests for the oppressive whims of those who want to fulfill their own policies at the expense of progressive Muslim countries and forces of the region.

The Islamic Republic of Iran appeals to the various groups and Palestinian factions to comprehend the critical nature of the region and to exercise complete vigilance, bearing in mind that the path to the liberation of Palestine cannot be sought through Amman, Cairo, Baghdad, or other capitals of reactionary Arab states, or through Washington and Moscow. The experience of decades has taught us that not even 1 inch of dear Palestine's soil can be liberated without a multifaceted and beneficial Islamic conflict, with the active participation of the Muslim Palestinian nation.

History has proven that to retreat from the Zionist regime has made it more audacious, sowing more seeds of discord and future aggression. The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the Palestinian issue, at this critical time in history, calls for a concerted decision and historic action, and the Palestinian resistance movement requires a concrete and basic reassessment of its past and present. This should be followed by new and appropriate action vis-a-vis the sacred, Islamic Palestinian aspiration.

It is imperative that the Palestinian nation again identify its friends and foes and base its strategy and struggle solely on the armor of its faith. Once again it should strangle the inauspicious and humiliated voice of compromise.

Khamene'i Addresses Aeronautic Industry Workers

LD190529 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 18 Apr 87

[Text] President Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i inspected the aeronautics industries of the Defense Ministry today on the Islamic Republic's Armed Forces day. He opened a permanent exhibition of ministry's aeronautics industries. During the inspection, Defense Minister Colonel Jalali recounted the reasons behind establishing a permanent exhibition of the ministry's aeronautics industries. The latest achievements of the state aircraft industries were reported to the president by the managing director of the Defense Ministry's defense and helicopter manufacturing industries, later this morning.

During a ceremony, Khamene'i opened the permanent exhibition of the Defense Ministry aeronautic industries, which shows the ability for self-reliance in the ranks of the expert work force in the aeronautics industries.

In a speech delivered at the ceremony, President Khamene'i stated: Fortunately, our people and our committed and hard-working work force have shown in real terms that they can meet their own basic needs. This is the key for all forms of progress. We may be at the beginning of the road, but the crucial point is that of making headway toward the countries' self-reliance and independence. In the open political atmosphere of the Islamic Republic of Iran, efforts and hard work will be inspired. Stressing that today all efforts and energy should be channelled toward the countries' self-reliance and independence, the president said: Is this not the same Iran that witnessed the loftiest philosophers, physicians, and scientists in the past centuries? Now that we are once again finding ourselves, we sense we are a talented nation. We must make our future correspond to our cultural and scientific heritage.

In conclusion, the president added: All over this country there are talents to be utilized. You, who stand fast and repair or refurbish a part of an aircraft, helicopter or combat hardware, are the same as those who are fighting at the fronts of the imposed war.

Later, some presents were distributed among the families of the martyrs of the state aeronautic industries by the president to honor their service.

Views Industry's Self-Sufficiency

LD190536 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 18 Apr 87

[Text] Following his visit to an aeronautics industry exhibition in Tehran today, President Khamene'i gave an interview to our correspondent:

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] Now that you have visited the Defense Ministry aeronautics industry as well as its permanent exhibition, could you please tell us about your impression and assessment of the achievements of the Iranian experts in rendering this industry self-sufficient?

[Khamene'i] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. The visit showed beyond any doubt that our faithful and committed forces, who are devoted to the revolution, are capable of shouldering the heavy burden of our country's self-sufficiency. This is a fact that becomes more and more obvious during visits to the various technical units of the country's industry, where faithful and committed people are working.

We have noticed a comprehensive, diversified and very high standard of efforts being made in the aeronautics industry by our own highly skilled and knowledgeable experts. These experts include both military and civilian individuals who are engaged in all aspects of repairs connected with our aircraft. These committed brothers are now overhauling and reparing the parts which, in the past, used to be shipped abroad, or to America, for repairs or replacement. I am informed that these brothers are engaged in maintaining some highly complex parts of our air industry. They handle the overhauling, repairing, testing, and making operational these important and complex parts. Apart from this, they also make the parts themselves.

As for the exhibition, we noticed the same thing in the helicopter as well as the aeronautic industry sectors. All in all, my assessment points to the fact that our faithful forces are capable of rendering the country self-sufficient in various fields. Today, as far as the question of technical warfare is concerned, we need to be able to stand on our own feet and rely on ourselves.

I believe that the big powers do not wish to see the Islamic Republic and our combative nation enjoying high standards of fighting ability. Therefore, it is up to us to make this possible. Thanks be to God, this objective is being achieved in various sectors. One notices a comprehensive and loyal effort here. The outlook is, consequently, very promising.

[Correspondent] Thank you. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Khamene'i Receives New Japanese Envoy's Credentials

LD191625 Tehran IRNA in English 1621 GMT 19 Apr 87

[Text] Tehran, April 19, IRNA — New Japanese Ambassador to Iran Yoshio Fujimoto called on President 'Ali Khamene'i here Sunday to submit his credentials. During the meeting, the Japanese ambassador said that his country is interested in expanding her "friendly" relations with the Islamic Republic.

In response, President Khamene'i, calling for further expansion of Tehran-Tokyo ties, said that Japan would be able to contribute towards Iranian development plans and construction projects after the war.

'Memorandum of Understanding' Signed With Bulgaria

NC160854 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0330 GMT 16 Apr 87

[Text] According to a Central News Unit report, the final round of talks at the fourth joint session between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Bulgaria was held yesterday afternoon at the Ministry of Agriculture. Our agriculture minister, the Bulgarian foreign trade minister, and a number of officials from both countries attended these talks.

During this meeting, Agriculture Minister Zali stated: Despite the difficulties created by world arrogance through decreasing oil prices and the bombing of our cities, the spirit of resistance among our people has grown. The need to free the country from dependence on its oil income has become the focal point of efforts currently being undertaken by officials of the Islamic Republic.

The Bulgarian trade minister then said: I wish to thank officials from the Islamic Republic of Iran, and especially their excellencies the president and the prime minister, for their hospitality. We want to further expand our relations with Iran.

At this round of talks, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Iranian and Bulgarian ministers. This memorandum stipulates that Iran will export 1 million tonnes of oil, as well as dried fruit, fresh fruit, fruit concentrates, carpets, buses, ambulances, chassis for lift trucks, and parts for foundries, to Bulgaria. It also calls for bilateral cooperation in agriculture, pedological surveys, the training of forestry and irrigation experts, and the expansion of agricultural cooperatives.

In accordance with this memorandum, Bulgaria will export cheese, cigarettes, tobacco, meat, chemicals, paper, and electrical and electronic products to Iran. The understanding also stipulates that banking facilities should be extended by both sides in order to increase trade. Bulgaria will cooperate with Iran in the manufacture of animal feed and tomato paste, as well as in plans for the construction of a dam in Khorasan Province.

Omani Foreign Ministry Official Arrives for Visit

LD191737 Tehran IRNA in English 1702 GMT 19 Apr 87

[Text] Tehran, April 19, IRNA — Director General of Oman's Foreign Ministry for Arab Affairs, Badr al-Shanfari, arrived here at the head of a delegation Sunday and was received at the airport by officials of the Iranian Foreign Ministry.

During his visit, Al-Shanfari will discuss matters of mutual interest and issues of the Strait of Hormuz with Iranian officials.

Montazeri Urges Propagation of Islam Abroad

LD201918 Tehran IRNA in English 1839 GMT 20 Apr 87

[Text] Tehran, April 20, IRNA — The Islamic Republic should propagate the noble teachings of Islam in different languages among the world's eager and oppressed nations, to counter the absurd and senseless theories being imposed by global powers on them, said Atatollah Hoseyn 'Ali Montazeri here Monday.

Ayatollah Montazeri made the remarks in a meeting with officials of the Islamic Propagation Organisation (IPO) in Qom, where he stressed that propagation outside Iran is more important than inside the country under the present circumstances. World nations are eager to get acquainted with noble Islamic teachings, he added.

Iranians have played a significant role in promoting Islam, said the ayatollah, noting that most of the treaties on Islamic sciences were authored by scholars of Iranian origin.

Future leader of the Islamic revolution regretted that Muslim states oppose Iran instead of cooperating with this great country.

Armed Forces Joint Staff Communique No 2,812

LD201635 Tehran IRNA in English 1620 GMT 20 Apr 87

[Text] Tehran, April 20, IRNA — At least 15 Iraqi soldiers were killed or wounded and five enemy bunkers and several vehicles were destroyed in the northwestern fronts Sunday, in artillery duels with Muslim combatants of Iran, said a military Communique here Monday.

Joint Staff Communique Number 2812 said that Iranian Gendarmerie forces responded to Iraqi artillery fire in parts of the southern and western fronts Sunday, killing or wounding a number of enemy soldiers and destroying an artillery piece, a mortar launcher, one command jeep and seven bunkers of theirs.

In the southern fronts Sunday, Iraq forces sustained heavy casualties and at least 16 enemy tanks were set abalze or damaged by Iranian artillery fire. Artillery fire of Iranian Muslim combatants suppressed four Iraqi engineering vehicles engaged in digging trenches in the Qasr-e Shirin sector, western fronts, halting their operations.

Exchange of sporadic artillery and mortar fire continued in the western fronts Sunday, raging somewhat more heavily in Sumar. In Mehran and Qalaviza heights, Iranian artillery fire disarrayed Iraqi tanks and checked their operations, the communique concluded.

VII.	WESTERN EUROPE DAILY REPORT	Contents unchanged
VIII.	SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA DAILY REPORT	Renamed; formerly SOUTH ASIA DAILY REPORT; contents include: International Affairs Inter-African Affairs Central Africa Burundi Cameroon Central African Republic Congo Equatorial Guinea Gabon Rwanda Sao Tome & Principe Zaire East Africa Djibouti Ethiopia Kenya Somalia Tanzania Uganda Indian Ocean Comoros Madagascar Mauritius Seychelles Southern Africa Angola Botswana Lesotho Malawi Mozambique Namibia Republic of South Africa Reunion Swaziland Zambia Zimbabwe Western Africa Benin Burkina Faso Cape Verde Islands The Gambia Ghana Guinea Guinea-Bissau Ivory Coast Liberia Mali Niger Nigeria Senegal Sierra Leone Togo

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